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GO FOR GOLD

WORLD JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIP PREVIEW

{Inside}



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Monday, December 19, 2011
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News worth sharing.

Dictator. Dead



► North Korean leader Kim Jong Il waves during a meeting with South Korean President Kim Dae-jung, not pictured, in 2000. The dictator has died at age 69. Story, page 5.

GETTY IMAGES FILE

'Tis the season for checkstops

► Police out in full force targeting drivers suspected of impaired driving

In the first part in a weeklong series exploring implications of impaired driving, Metro takes you behind the scenes for a look at what drivers can expect if they're caught drunk behind the wheel.



SHELLEY WILLIAMSON
@METRONEWS.CA

Most drivers pulled over in Edmonton Police Service's Target All Drunk Drivers (TADD) campaign have only had two cocktails, if they've imbibed at all.

"Everyone has either had two drinks, or none," Const. David Green, of Edmonton Police Service's impaired-driving countermeasures unit.

The EPS unit conducts about 35 or 36 checkstop shifts annually, in December, on long weekends and holidays known to be associated with alcohol, such as St. Patrick's Day. Metro witnessed some of those statistics first-hand on a recent ride-along.

The first driver, claiming to have not consumed alcohol, is brought to the checkstop "bus" from a Curb the Danger call. His reading is 186.

Soon after, the next admits to quaffing three beers. Two tests detect blood alcohol over 130.

"People sort of try to be honest," said Green.

Checkstop facts

- The most arrests from a checkstop shift this season occurred on Dec. 10, when 14 impaired drivers were plucked off city streets. The average is seven.
- Police target the areas most likely to house intoxicated people, including strip clubs, liquor stores and licensed establishments.
- About one impaired driver a night comes from a "Curb the Danger" call. Two were called in during this shift. One resulted in charges, while a second, following a hit-and-run with minor injuries, led to a foot chase but no charges.

The final test involves a man who failed to submit a breath sample in an approved screening device nine times roadside.

He stalls in the phone room trying to contact a lawyer. Officers call one on his behalf. The man finally blows one-and-a-half times the legal limit. After a lengthy show of beligerence, the man, who police discover is awaiting a court date for drug trafficking, is read his paperwork in handcuffs.

He reluctantly gets in a cab after asking loudly if there are "real" police present.

More on impaired driving {page 3}

North Korean leader Kim Jong Il dies

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Teenager charged in west-end slaying

Edmonton police have charged a 16-year-old with the city's 45th homicide of the year.

Officers were called to Potter Greens Park in the upscale Lewis Estates neighbourhood last Wednesday at 11:18 p.m. and found a 17-year-old boy bleeding in the snow.

He died of his injuries, later determined to be from a gunshot, a few hours later in hospital.

EPS spokesperson Noreen Remtulla told reporters Sunday "this file is still under investigation," and revealed no new details of the murder or accused youth.

Remtulla said the teen was charged Saturday and is in police custody.

Friends have identified the victim as Russell Haidar.

A funeral for the Ross Sheppard High School senior was held Saturday.

By Sunday, a Facebook page in Haidar's honour had more than 160 likes, as well as photos and wall postings of grief and remembrance.

This is the second 16-year-old to face murder charges in Edmonton this year.

Police charged a 16-year-old from St. Paul in August with the June slaying of Bruce Dumais, 31.

A spokesperson said on Friday that homicide investigators don't believe Haidar's killing was a random incident.

● SHELLEY WILLIAMSON



► Const. David Green administers a breath sample test on a suspected impaired driver in the Checkstop unit on the weekend, as part of EPS's Target All Drunk Drivers campaign.

'Everyone has asthma': Checkstop police officer

- Edmonton police have seen every trick to avoid or fool breathalyzer
- Not blowing hard enough, stalling in bathroom common ploys



SHELLEY WILLIAMSON
@METRONEWS.CA

Members of Edmonton Police Service's impaired driving countermeasures unit have heard every stall in the book for suspected impaired drivers facing a breath test.

"I've seen people put money in their mouth before blowing. They're not slot machines. It's not going to make change for you," Const. David Green said of what he's seen

when administering screening devices roadside, or the breathalyzer in the Checkstop unit.

Though Green said the machines are tested often and are impossible to fool, people still try.

One woman disappeared into the phone room only to be found eating pages from the phone book in an effort to avoid a blood-alcohol reading that would prompt a 24-hour suspension or charge.

"Everyone has asthma,"

Const. Ian Brooks — who also works as a breath technician — said of the biggest excuse given by people who do not breathe adequately enough to provide a sample. "Once I tell them 'You're going to get charged with refusal,' I never seem to hear that again."

Others hide out in the bathroom or "talk to a lawyer for two hours," said Brooks, adding,

"If you talk to lawyer, they're going to tell you to blow."

Breath basics

- A blood-alcohol reading of 50 to 99 milligrams means a 24-hour licence suspension. A reading over 100 results in a "fail," a trip to the Checkstop unit, more testing and likely impaired-driving charges.
- Under new legislation, the impairment limit will be lowered to 50 milligrams (or 0.05) from its current 80 (or 0.08). Licences will be suspended for three days.

1

news


Canada's transport regulator has ruled airlines must protect passengers who are allergic to cats, and that could mean Fluffy will have to stay home. Scan code for story.

To scan 2D barcodes in Metro, download the free ScanLife app at 2dscan.com.

On the web at
metronews.ca

Liberal Leader Bob Rae says the troubled First Nations reserve of Attawapiskat is 'our Third World.' Video at metronews.ca/video



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HEATHER MCINTYRE/METRO



► Mrs. Claus with some of the gifts returned to the Santa's Anonymous depot on Sunday because recipients weren't home. Those families will be able to pick up the toys this week.

Santa's helpers spread the joy

► Volunteers delivering more than 25,000 toys this Christmas ► Donation boxes to remain at malls



HEATHER MCINTYRE
@METRONWS.CA

They were hauled out in garbage bags, piled high on sleds and then placed in vehicles driven by volunteers wearing Santa hats, elf costumes and plain clothes.

But regardless of their outfits, there were many Santa's helpers over the weekend, delivering toys for Santa's Anonymous.

"The last bag for delivery left at 11:22 a.m.," executive director Lana Nordlund said on Sunday.

Nordlund was concerned

3,200
Volunteers organized parking, dispatched drivers and delivered toys on both Saturday and Sunday.

when only 5,000 toys had been donated at the beginning of the month, but the community pulled through — including with nearly 6,600 teddy bears tossed on the ice at the Edmonton Oil Kings game Saturday.

Notes were left for recipients not home and those

families, along with others who missed the registration deadline for delivery, can pick up the toys from a "walk-in" location this week.

Donation boxes will remain in malls, and any extra toys not donated through the Christmas Bureau will be given to organizations such as the Bissell Centre.

A few will also be held onto in order to get a head start on next year.

In all, Nordlund estimates more than 25,000 toys will have been delivered by Christmas.

MONEY MATTERS

Leduc puts brakes on collision fee

Leduc council put the brakes on a proposed Motor Vehicle Collision Response fee last week, which would have charged \$500 per incident to drivers when fire services was dispatched in 2012.

Administration said it would bring in \$30,000 in needed revenue for the fire department.

Ald. Terry Lazowski cited increased insurance rates and drivers settling their own fender benders as two of many issues, adding first response is a core service, which is "why property taxes are collected."

Edmonton does not charge the fee, while Strathcona County does.

● HEATHER MCINTYRE

Memorial for shooting victims

Colonel Gray High School in Charlottetown will remember two P.E.I. men killed last week in southern Alberta with a memorial service and game of catch Monday.

Baseball players Mitch MacLean, 20, and Tanner Craswell, 22, were killed near Claresholm. ● METRO

North Korea leader dead at 69

► Few facts are known about the highly secretive Kim Jong Il

Kim Jong Il, North Korea's mercurial and enigmatic longtime leader, has died of heart failure. He was 69.

In a special broadcast Monday from the North Korean capital, state media said Kim died of a heart ailment on a train due to a "great mental and physical strain" on Dec. 17 during a "high intensity field inspection." It said an autopsy was done on Dec. 18 and fully confirmed the diagnosis.

Kim is believed to have suffered a stroke in 2008, but he had appeared relatively vigorous in photos and video from recent trips to China and Russia and in numerous trips around the country carefully documented by state media. The communist country's Dear Leader — reputed to have had a taste for cigars, cognac and gourmet cuisine — was believed to have had

diabetes and heart disease. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

The life of Kim

- North Korean legend has it that Kim was born on Mount Paekdu, one of Korea's most cherished sites, in 1942, a birth heralded in the heavens by a pair of rainbows and a brilliant new star. Soviet records, however, indicate he was born in Siberia, in 1941.
- Kim Jong Il, a graduate of Pyongyang's Kim Il Sung University, was 33 when his father anointed him his eventual successor.
- Kim Jong Il took over after his father died in 1994, eventually taking the posts of chairman of the National Defence Commission, commander of the Korean People's Army and head of the ruling Worker's Party father remained as North Korea's "eternal president."



► North Korean leader Kim Jong Il, left, and South Korean President Roh Moo-Hyun inspect an honour guard together on Oct. 2, 2007, in Pyongyang. The two leaders held an unsuccessful three-day summit aimed at ending the half-century of animosity between the two states, who have remained technically at war since 1950.

Death toll unknown after oil platform capsizes

An oil-drilling platform capsized and later sank amid fierce storms off Russia's east coast Sunday, plunging dozens of workers into the churning, icy waters. Four were confirmed dead and 49 were missing.

The Transportation Ministry said the Kolskaya platform started sinking after

a strong wave broke some of its equipment and the portholes in the crew's dining room. One five-metre wave washed away the platform's lifeboats, leaving the crew with no escape.

The Emergencies Ministry said in a statement Sunday 67 people had been aboard the platform



► In this undated handout photo, the oil drilling platform Kolskaya is seen in the Sea of Okhotsk.

as it was being towed about 200 kilometres off the coast of Sakhalin Island.

Fourteen people were rescued at sea by the ship that had been towing the platform. Further rescue efforts were being hampered by the severe weather conditions, officials said.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Oil platform

- There were no immediate reports of environmental damage, which would be unlikely since the platform was not drilling for oil when it capsized and was carrying very little fuel at the time

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Safety of fighting fires on trial

Small town volunteer fire departments face 'aggressive' stand by Ministry of Labour

A rare prosecution involving a small Ontario town's volunteer fire department has ignited concern among firefighters that legal hazards may now be among the dangers they face in responding to emergencies.

While many in the fire services community are closely watching the case, the trial has gone largely unnoticed by the millions

of Canadians who rely on volunteers to respond to pleas for help when things go up in flames.

"My concern is that, in future, potential incident commanders are worried about possible litigation, is that going to make them second-guess their rescue decision?" said Mike Molloy, chief of the Meaford fire department now being prosecuted.

The case stems from an early morning restaurant fire in September 2009 when volunteer firefighters arrived to the frantic screams of a woman saying her boyfriend was trapped in the apartment upstairs.

Two firefighters — one had finished his shift at Dairy Queen the evening before — went inside.

As the building burned,

one of them "lost air," although it's not exactly clear why.

In the ensuing mayhem, they were unable to get out and, with one near death, had to be rescued by colleagues.

The department is now on trial on three charges the provincial Ministry of Labour laid under the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

In essence, the ministry asserts that Meaford did not take reasonable measures to ensure the safety of the duo.

Now that the prosecution has made its case in Ontario court in Owen Sound, Ont., the defence is calling for the judge to throw the case out for lack of evidence. A decision is under reserve.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Man charged in N.Y. burning death

► Senior citizen died after being set on fire in apartment elevator ► Suspect says the woman owed him \$2,000

A man charged with dousing a woman in flammable liquid and tossing a Molotov cocktail on her in an elevator told police he set her on fire because he was angry that she owed him \$2,000, authorities said Sunday.

Jerome Isaac was arrested Sunday on murder and arson charges in the death of 73-year-old Deloris Gillespie.

The 47-year-old Isaac reeked of gasoline when he entered a police station overnight and implicated himself in Gillespie's death, New York Police Department spokesman Paul Browne said.

Gillespie was ambushed in the elevator of her



Brooklyn apartment building on Saturday afternoon, Browne said.

The suspect had been waiting for her when the elevator doors opened to the fifth floor of her build-

ing in Prospect Heights, police said.

"It was apparent he knew she was on the elevator," Browne said.

After setting Gillespie ablaze, Isaac went to his apartment building just blocks away and set a fire there, Browne said. He then hid on a roof before turning himself in to police, Browne said.

Isaac told police that Gillespie owed him \$2,000 from some work he had done for her, Browne said.

The attack happened shortly after 4 p.m., lasted about a minute and was recorded by two video cameras, including one inside the small elevator.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Russia. Protests



DMITRY LOVETSKY/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Another post-election rally

About 7,000 protesters demanding a rerun of elections gathered Saturday in central St. Petersburg for a second weekend of protests against Russia's alleged fraud-tainted vote, a comparatively small crowd that underlined the challenge to the opposition of keeping up public pressure on authorities.

British lawmaker fired over Nazi party photo

A British Conservative lawmaker in Britain has been fired as a parliamentary aide for attending a friend's Nazi-themed stag party.

The party said Sunday that Aidan Burley had "behaved in a manner which is offensive and foolish" and had been removed as parliamentary private secretary to the transport minister. The party says Prime Minister David Cameron has ordered an investigation into Burley's behaviour.

Last week a newspaper ran a picture showing Burley with a man dressed in an SS uniform at the party.

Burley said he felt "deep regret" about the event, at which guests toasted the Third Reich.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Flood death toll in Philippines to rise

► Tropical storm leaves hundreds dead ► Winds, floods turn worst-hit cities into muddy wastelands

As a storm that killed more than 650 in the southern Philippines raged outside the store where she works, Amor Limbago worriedly called home to check on her parents, but their cellphones just kept ringing and later went dead.

Limbago, 21, rushed home as soon as the flash floods receded and confirmed her worst fear: Her parents and seven other relatives were gone, swept away from their hut by the river. They had eagerly planned a small Christmas dinner in that hut just days earlier.

"I returned and saw that our house was completely gone," a weeping Limbago told The Associated Press from Cagayan de Oro city. "There was

nothing but mud all over and knee-deep floodwaters."

Tropical Storm Washi blew away Sunday after devastating a wide swath of the mountainous region on Mindanao Island, which is unaccustomed to major storms.

It killed at least 652 people and left more than 900 others missing, the Philippine Red Cross officials said.

Most of the victims were asleep Friday night when flash floods cascaded down mountain slopes with logs and uprooted trees, swelling rivers.

The late-season tropical storm turned the worst-hit coastal cities of Cagayan de Oro and nearby Iligan into muddy wastelands filled with over-

► Residents retrieve usable items from their destroyed houses on Sunday after a flash flood in Cagayan De Oro city in southern Philippines.



turned cars and broken trees.

Most of the dead were children and women, Red Cross Secretary General Gwendolyn Pang said.

Although the disaster-prone Philippines is lashed by about 20 typhoons and storms annually, the extreme devastation and carnage

shocked many, coming close to Christmas — the predominantly Roman Catholic nation's most-awaited time for family reunions.

Army officials in the south said they cancelled Christmas parties and would donate the food to homeless survivors.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Human toll

► The government's Office of Civil Defence placed the number of dead at 516, missing at 274 and rescued at 431 by press time on Sunday. Its head, Benito Ramos, said he expects the death toll to rise.

PRISONER SWAP: PART TWO

Israel frees last batch of Hamas militants

Israel was wrapping up preparations to release 550 Palestinian prisoners late Sunday, in the second and final phase of a swap with Hamas militants that brought home an Israeli soldier after five years in captivity.

Under the Egyptian-brokered deal, Israel has agreed to exchange a total of 1,027 prisoners for Sgt. Gilad Schalit, who was captured by Gaza militants in June 2006.

Schalit returned home in October when Israel freed the first batch of 477 prisoners. Sunday's release will complete the swap.

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Rae urges PM to visit Attawapiskat

FRANK GUNN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

► Liberal leader says PM should take responsibility for problems on reserve

Liberal Leader Bob Rae is accusing the Conservatives and Prime Minister Stephen Harper of showing a "lack of respect" toward the troubled First Nations community of Attawapiskat.

On Saturday, as he wrapped up a visit to see the community's housing crisis first-hand, Rae chided Harper — who has long claimed to have a soft spot for northern Canada — for not travelling to the region himself.

"Where there are real people living, and living in really difficult conditions, the prime minister has nothing to say — he's not there," Rae said in a telephone interview.

"There's a great concern about the lack of respect that's been shown to

"You show respect by coming, not by insisting that people come to see you."

LIBERAL LEADER BOB RAE

people here."

Rae's visit is the second for an opposition leader in as many weeks. NDP Leader Nycole Turmel visited Attawapiskat last month and promptly urged Harper to do the same.

Chief Theresa Spence has sought a court injunction to oust the third-party manager that was appointed to take over the band's financial affairs, who is being paid \$1,300 a day from band funds. A ruling is expected this week.

THE CANADIAN PRESS



► Attawapiskat First Nation Chief Therese Spence, right, talks with Liberal Leader Bob Rae in Attawapiskat, Ontario on Saturday.

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Pope decries overcrowded prisons

► Italian prisoners grateful for the pontiff's visit ► Benedict XVI urges government to reform the system

Pope Benedict XVI made an emotional visit Sunday to Rome's main prison, meeting with detainees, denouncing prison overcrowding and calling for greater dignity for inmates everywhere.

Benedict spent over an hour at Rome's Rebibbia prison, fielding questions from inmates who spoke of their despair at being kept in overcrowded cells, away from their families, some of them sick with AIDS.

The 84-year-old pope told the 300 men and women gathered in the prison chapel that he loved them and prayed for them. He reminded them that Christ was imprisoned before being sentenced to "the most savage

punishment" of all — death.

"Inmates are human beings who, despite their crimes, deserve to be treated with respect and dignity," he told them.

Benedict said the system must be overhauled so that prisoners aren't subjected to a "double punishment" by serving time in insufferable conditions.

And he noted that justice doesn't have to just be about righting a wrong, but also showing mercy. For God, "justice and charity coincide; there's no just action that isn't also an act of mercy and forgiveness, and at the same time there's no merciful action that isn't perfectly just."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



► Pope Benedict XVI greets inmates during his visit to Rome's Rebibbia prison Sunday.



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► Megan Roney shops online at Europa Coffeehouse in Denver, Colo.

Online holiday sales up in U.S.

► Online shoppers have spent \$30.9 billion over the past six weeks, up 15 per cent from this time last year

U.S. online sales this holiday shopping season are up 15 per cent compared to last year, after what may have been the busiest week of the season, said research firm comScore on Sunday.

Shoppers have spent \$30.9 billion online from Nov. 1 through Dec. 16, up from \$26.9 billion at the same point last year, said the Reston, Va., company, which tracks Web use.

Online sales surpassed \$1 billion on four days last week. Total sales for the week climbed 15 per cent to \$6.31 billion compared to last year.

The five days that ended on Friday "will almost cer-

40%
The holiday shopping season can make up close to 40 per cent of retailers' annual revenue.

tainly be the heaviest week of the online holiday shopping season," said comScore chairman Gian Fulgoni. Online spending will begin to slow as Christmas draws closer, he said.

But "Cyber Monday," the Monday after U.S. Thanksgiving, is still the largest online shopping day ever, according to com-

Score. Sales for that day rose 22 per cent from last year to \$1.25 billion.

The holiday shopping season can make up to 40 per cent of retailers' annual revenue. The online sales data point to Americans' growing comfort with using their personal computers, tablets and smartphones to shop for the holidays.

Discounting and promotions have also boosted shopping this year.

ComScore said on Sunday that shoppers have received free shipping on at least half of all their purchases in each week of this year's holiday shopping season. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

CNN star to testify at UK press ethics inquiry

The often colourful and sometimes controversial story of CNN star Piers Morgan's rise to the top will be revisited today when the former editor appears by videolink at a judge-led inquiry into the ethics and practices of Britain's scandal-tarred press.

Actors Hugh Grant and Sienna Miller, and Harry Potter author J.K. Rowling are among those who have given evidence about press abuse, while executives and lawyers for Murdoch's News Corp. have defended the newspaper.

Morgan shot to national prominence when he was picked by Murdoch to run the News of the World at age 28.

Under his tenure, the tabloid exposed actor Hugh Grant's liaison with Hollywood prostitute Divine Brown and Princess Diana's late-night phone calls to



► Piers Morgan in Los Angeles last July.

married art dealer Oliver Hoare. It wasn't all down to good reporting: Morgan has acknowledged he kept his edge in part through bribes paid to informants on rival titles.

In 1995, Morgan left the News of the World for the Daily Mirror. His time there

was marked by scoops and controversy, but his editorship ended in 2004 when he ran a faked photograph purporting to show a British soldier urinating on an Iraqi detainee.

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Pilot strike cancels Iberia flights

Spanish airline Iberia cancelled a third of its flights Sunday because of a strike by pilots fearing job losses when company planes are diverted for use by Iberia's planned new budget carrier.

Iberia said it scrapped 91 flights, mostly domestic routes, but that the airline managed to find alternative seats for about 80 per cent of the travellers.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ECB exec explains exit

A top European Central Bank official has publicly discussed the reasons for his surprise resignation, saying he is not satisfied with the direction Europe's currency union has taken.

Juergen Stark said in an interview in Monday's edition of Germany's Wirtschaftswoche magazine that the ECB had done its job by keeping inflation under control across the eurozone, which it does through adjusting interest rates. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

British banks to be restructured

The British government will restructure the country's banks by separating their retail activities from riskier investment banking operations, Business Secretary Vince Cable said Sunday.

Cable told the BBC the aim was to safeguard the economy: "We just cannot risk having a repetition of that financial catastrophe that we had three years ago." **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

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WORLD JUNIOR PREVIEW



► Jaden Schwartz practises with his Canadian teammates last week.



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► Canada last won gold in 2009, with silver medals in 2010 and 2011 ► Canada won gold every year from 2005 to 2009 after going seven years without winning it ► The tournament opens Dec. 26 in both Calgary and Edmonton ► Four players are returning from last year's silver-medal team

TEXT LAURENCE HEINEN PHOTOS THE CANADIAN PRESS



Canada always in Contention

► Canada's head coach Don Hay talks to his players during practice in preparation for the upcoming IIHF World Junior Championship in Calgary on Thursday.

LAURENCE HEINEN
EDMONTON@METRONEWS.CA

Ever since entering a national under-20 team into the World Junior Championship back in 1982, Canada has been a force to be reckoned with at the annual tournament.

Canada won the first of its 15 gold medals 30 years ago when the tournament was contested in Winnipeg and Minnesota.

After capturing gold twice more in the '80s, Canada won back-to-back tournaments in 1991-92

before going on a run of five straight first-place finishes from 1993-97.

Current national junior team coach Don Hay was also at the helm when Canada steamrolled its way to the title in 1995 when Red Deer hosted the tournament.

"It's more of an event now, bigger media coverage and bigger coverage among Canadians," Hay said. "It's such a tradition amongst them and so passionate."

From 1998-2004 Canada went through a bit of a dry spell, but still managed to

capture four silver and two bronze medals.

Then came the 2005 event in Grand Forks, N.D., when Canada cruised to six straight victories, including a 6-1 triumph over Russia in the tournament final.

Current Calgary Flames coach Brent Sutter was behind the bench in Grand Forks and again the next year in Vancouver when Canada also reeled off six straight wins to capture gold.

"Even though it was a different group and even though the year before

Games

► **Pool B.** Canada will play its Pool B games in Edmonton. Pool A and medal-round games are in Calgary.

► **IceDogs.** Mark Visentin, one of four Niagara IceDogs named to the Canadian team, will start in goal.

was like a dream team, they wanted to show that they could win every

► **Players.** The Ontario Hockey League has the most players on the team with 10, followed by five from the Western Hockey League, four from the Quebec Major Junior Hockey League, two from the NHL and one from the college ranks.

game, too, and so there was that push and there was that drive that they

didn't want to lose either," Sutter said. "It was kind of neat how it all unfolded."

After three more championship performances from 2007-09 Canada had matched its impressive streak of five straight gold medals.

Despite losses in the title game to the United States in Saskatoon in 2010 and in upset fashion to Russia last year in Buffalo, N.Y., Canada has reached the world junior final for 10 straight years and has medalled at the event 13 straight times since 1999.

2012 tourney will have Oilers, Flames flavour

► Baertschi will lead Swiss; Klefbom for the Swedes ► As many as nine players drafted by Alberta clubs could compete in world juniors



AARON VICKERS
EDMONTON@METRONEWS.CA

Though there is no representation on Team Canada from either the Edmonton Oilers or Calgary Flames, there are plenty of prospects from both NHL clubs littered throughout the 2012 World Junior Championship.

The Oilers boast five draftees participating, while the Flames could have four, encouraging for Tod Button, Calgary's director of amateur scouting.

"We want our players to gain as many varying and developmentally beneficial experiences as possible,"

Button said.

Perhaps no more notable prospect participating in Sven Baertschi, selected by the Flames in the first round of the 2011 draft. Representing Switzerland, Baertschi could have the biggest impact on his country's success. Markus Granlund, also picked in the 2011 draft, will represent Finland.

Flames prospects John Gaudreau and Bill Arnold will have the opportunity to earn a position with Team USA, whose camp runs from Dec. 17 to 23.

Much like Calgary, the Oilers will have a first-round pick from 2011 participating. While Ryan Nu-

Prospects

► **Edmonton prospects:** Martin Marincin, Oscar Klefbom, David Musil, Pells and Gernat.

► **Calgary Prospects:** Bill Arnold, John Gaudreau, Sven Baertschi and Markus Granlund

gent-Hopkins will be busy in the NHL, defenceman Oscar Klefbom will play a big role for Sweden. So too will 2010 pick Martin Marincin, who is set to represent Slovakia for the third consecutive year.

Joining Marincin with Slovakia is Martin Gernat, while David Musil, the son

of former Oilers and Flames defenceman Frank Musil, will dress for the Czech Republic. Latvian Kristins Pelss rounds out the Oilers' participation in the world juniors.

While having prospects participating in the tournament, Button would rather eventually see them in a Flames jersey.

"As an organization we are proud of the young Flame prospects who participate in the world juniors but recognize it is a 10-day tournament played once a year," Button said.

"Real gratification for an organization is when they are wearing the flaming C on a full-time basis."



► Oscar Klefbom, pictured here at the 2011 NHL draft, is one of nine players drafted by the Oilers or Flames that will be in this year's edition of the World Junior Championship.

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WJHC showcases talent worthy of NHL stardom



AARON VICKERS
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The World Junior Championship can be the casual fan's first introduction to the next wave of NHL talent.

The thought is no different this year, with a plethora of potential first-round picks for June's NHL Entry Draft participating in the 2012 world juniors.

That includes Canada's Ryan Murray, who will challenge Russia's dynamic duo of Nail Yakupov and Mikhail Grigorenko for the first overall pick in the 2012 draft. Sweden's trio of Sebastian Collberg, Pontus Aberg and Filip Forsberg are also highly touted.

Finland's Olli Maatta, Zemgus Girgensons of Latvia and Czech Republic

THE CANADIAN PRESS



► Ryan Murray

are just 17 years of age.

"The tournament is the highest level of competition a junior player can compete in," International Scouting Service head scout Ross MacLean said.

"A draft-eligible player who proves they can compete at that level as an under-age player will see their stock go through the roof."

A strong showing at the tournament can escalate or re-establish a player's stock in the NHL draft.

"The highest-ranked players have a lot to gain, in the sense that they can solidify their top rankings," MacLean added. "So Mikhail Grigorenko and Nail Yakupov of Russia as well as Ryan Murray of Canada have a little bit ... higher stakes on the line."

forward Martin Frk are also considered to be potential first-round selections participating in the tournament.

Generally referred to as a tournament for 19-year-olds, an appearance at the world juniors can boost the exposure of these prospects, many of whom

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► Canada opens against Finland on Boxing Day in Edmonton ► Canada has won 15 gold medals since 1974
 ► The last person to coach the Canadian team to a gold medal was Pat Quinn ► Group A teams: Latvia, Russia, Slovakia, Sweden and Switzerland ► Group B teams: Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland and the U.S.

TEXT AARON VICKERS PHOTOS THE CANADIAN PRESS/GETTY IMAGES



► Team Canada teammates Scott Wedgewood, left, and Devante Smith-Pelly on Thursday. The IIHF World Junior Championship opens Dec. 26 in both Calgary and Edmonton.

Team Canada will look to avenge the disappointment tasted in 2011 and return to its golden ways when it hosts the 2012 IIHF World Junior Championship in Alberta.

After rattling off five consecutive gold medals, Canada finds itself without a first place finish in back-to-back tournaments. In a hockey-crazy country, it's gold or nothing for Team

Canada forward Brendan Gallagher.

"The only real expectation is a gold medal, and as players that's what you want, so we're looking forward to that," Gallagher said.

Gallagher will be joined in the quest by four returning players from last year — Jaden Schwartz, Quinton Howden, Brett Connolly and goalie Mark

Visentin, who was between the pipes in a third period collapse in the gold medal game that saw the Russians score five unanswered goals in a 5-3 win a year ago.

"I learned a lot from last year," Visentin said. "That experience is already a long ways away. I put it in my pocket and I've kept walking. It's a whole new team and a new focus. We

"The only real expectation is a gold medal, and as players that's what you want, so we're looking forward to that."

BRENDAN GALLAGHER, TEAM CANADA

need to earn the gold medal this year."

Connolly, on loan from

the Tampa Bay Lightning, and Anaheim Ducks forward Devante Smith-Pelly make up the NHL contingent of Team Canada. Mark Scheifele, the team's top centre, saw time with the Winnipeg Jets early in the season before being returned to junior earlier in the year.

Twelve of the players on this talented Canadian team were first-round

picks in the NHL entry draft (some in 2010; others in 2011). Five were among the top 14 selections last June.

Much like the players, head coach Don Hay is hoping for a 16th golden finish to the world juniors for Canada.

"That's the way Canada thinks," added Hay. "Everything is gold or nothing here right now."



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Czech Republic

This team was once a powerhouse on the World Junior Championship scene, earning back-to-back gold medals in 2000 and 2001.

Struggling since, the Czechs have earned but one medal, a bronze in 2005. The Czech Ice Hockey Association hopes to turn the clock back in 2012.

Bolstered by five returning players, including Martin Frk, who is eligible for the 2012 NHL draft, the Czechs could be poised to do just that.

Defenceman David Musil, an Edmonton Oilers prospect and son of former NHL blueliner Frank Musil will join Frk in the Czechs' quest to secure a medal for the first time in seven years.



Denmark

Graduating to the World Junior Championship after winning Division I Group B in 2011, Denmark will do all it can to stay in the tournament's top division.

Nicklas Jensen, a first-round pick of the Vancouver Canucks, will do all he can to ensure the Danes avoid relegation in their first tournament action since 2008. He and Mads Eller, the younger brother of Montreal Canadiens forward Lars Eller, will have a tough time guiding a young Danish squad that averages just 18 years of age.

The goal for Denmark is to maintain their status in the top division. If Jensen is able to find success in the tournament, his country may just do that.



Finland

Finland will ice a relatively inexperienced team, despite having six returnees, as it hopes to earn its first medal at the tournament since 2006.

Any hopes to be in medal contention will fall squarely on the shoulders of brothers Mikael and Markus Granlund. Though he was unable to play due to a concussion last year, the ever-dangerous Mikael has the potential to be the tournament's top forward.

Markus, a Calgary Flames prospect, possesses the same game-breaking abilities as his sibling.

If the duo is able to perform up to expectations and get some help from Teemu Pulkkinen, Finland could challenge for a medal.



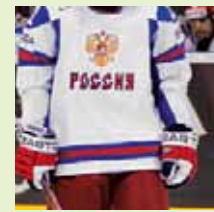
Latvia

Latvia has earned its way back into the World Junior Championship after being relegated as a result of a ninth-place showing at the Saskatoon tournament in 2010.

With the weight of the country on his shoulders, 2012 NHL entry draft eligible Zemgus Girgensons will carry the offensive load for Latvia.

The 17-year-old is considered to be the most talented hockey export the country has produced since defenceman Sandis Ozolinsh.

If Girgensons is able to lead Latvia to an eighth-or-better finish, Latvia could become the feel-good story of the 2012 World Junior Championship.



Russia

The Russian Hockey Federation would love nothing more than to replicate their golden performance in the 2011 edition of the tournament.

If they are to succeed in defending their crown, Russia will have to do it with a completely renovated roster. Only Yevgeni Kuznetsov is eligible to return.

That's not to say the Russians will not be as dangerous as last year. Let by dynamic forwards Vladislav Namestnikov and Nikita Kucherov, a pair of Tampa Bay Lightning draft picks, and aided by 2012 draft-eligible forwards Nail Yakupov and Mikhail Grigorenko, the Russians will be as explosive as ever in their quest to defend gold.



Slovakia

The Slovakian Ice Hockey Association hopes to use the 2012 World Junior Championship to get their program back on track after consecutive eighth-place finishes the previous two years.

Slovakia has struggled in the tournament since a fourth-place finish in 2009 but can rely on returning forward Tomas Jurco, a draft pick of the Detroit Red Wings. He is one of five players eligible to return from the Slovaks' entry last year, a group that includes Edmonton Oilers prospect Martin Marincin in his third world juniors.

If Jurco can provide the offence and Marincin is able to lock down the defensive zone, Slovakia could end its recent slump.



Sweden

Sweden hopes to prove that last year's result was nothing more than a blip when the team takes to the ice at the 2012 World Junior Championship.

Failing to earn a medal

for the first time in four years, Sweden will rely on both familiar and fresh faces in their quest for hardware. The team has five players returning from last year, but it may be in newcomer Mika Zibanejad, who started the season with the Ottawa Senators, that the team locates its focal point.

Sweden will need the best of a defensive core that includes Edmonton Oilers pick Oscar Klefbom and Minnesota Wild prospect Jonas Brodin if it hopes to return to winning ways.



Switzerland

Though they haven't medalled at the World Junior Championship since 1998, Switzerland has continued to build momentum on the international stage. Finishing fourth in 2010

and fifth last year in Buffalo, Switzerland is no longer a pushover at the tournament.

Though they will be without top player Nino Niederreiter, the Swiss hope to build on recent success and will rely heavily on Calgary Flames first-rounder Sven Bartschi.

He and Carolina Hurricanes pick Gregory Hofmann will be expected to carry the load for the Swiss in their continual efforts to grow as a serious threat in the tournament.



United States

After earning bronze on home ice in Buffalo last season, the U.S. hopes a return to Canadian soil can spell a return to gold glory at the 2012 World Junior Championship.

The Americans will bring an experienced team that has seven players from last year, none more important than Jack Campbell, who earned top goalie honours in 2011 and backstopped Team USA to gold in 2010.

If Campbell can keep the goals out, Anaheim Ducks prospect Emerson Etem will put them in.

Etem will be aided by fellow returnee Charlie Coyle. If the duo can click and Campbell rounds into form, Team USA could have much success in Canada.



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► Forward Tanner Pearson

Better late than never for Pearson

Tanner Pearson agrees with the labels late-bloomer, sleeper, dark horse and unknown quantity.

The 19-year-old from Kitchener, Ont., was ignored in the NHL draft in June. He received no invitations in the summer to an NHL rookie camp.

Pearson never played on a Canadian under-18 team or for Ontario in the world under-17 challenge. He wasn't invited to the Canadian junior hockey team's summer camp in August.

So the left-winger has basically made the Canadian junior team as a walk-on.

"If someone would have told me at the beginning of the year I would play for Canada at the world juniors I would have shook my head and laughed," Pearson said Thursday after Canada's first practice as a team.

"If you want to call me a late bloomer, go for it. The truth is, I kind of was a late bloomer. It probably wasn't until the past year and a half where I started to click and play what I knew I could play."

Canada returns to Calgary on Monday for an exhibition game versus Finland at the Scotiabank Saddledome.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Marincin hoping third time is a charm

- Marincin was picked 46th overall by the Oilers in the 2010 draft
- Will suit up for Slovakia at Scotiabank Saddledome in Calgary



LAURENCE HEINEN

EDMONTON@METRONEWS.CA

For the third straight season, Martin Marincin will suit up for Slovakia at the biggest junior hockey tournament in the world.

Under the guidance of new head coach Ernest Bokros, Marincin is hoping Slovakia can fare well in the preliminary round in order to advance to the playoff round of the 2012 World Junior Championship.

"It's very big," said Marincin.

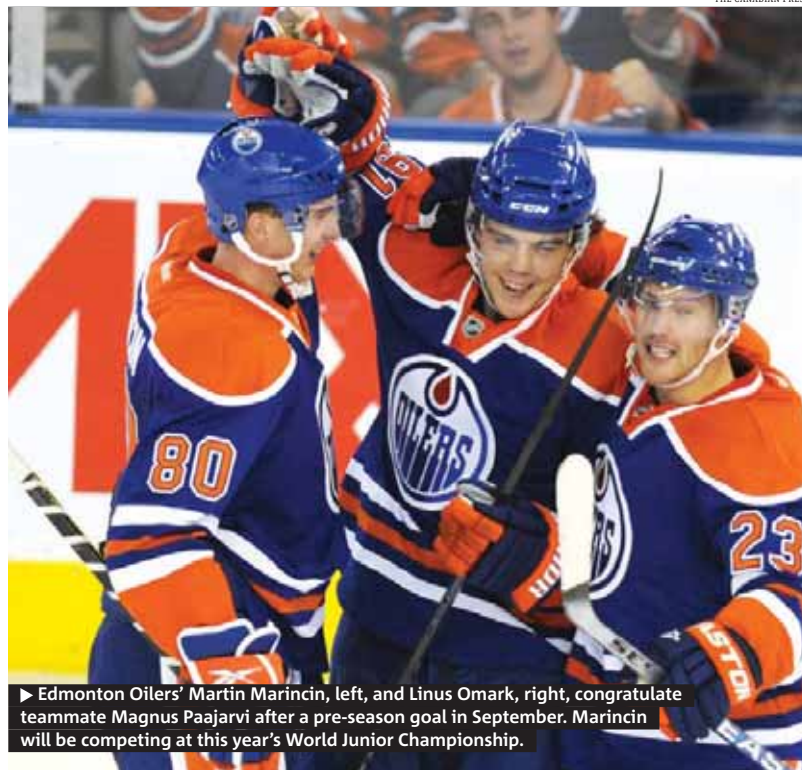
"It's a top tournament. I'm excited."

Unfortunately for Oilers fans in Edmonton, they won't be able to watch the hulking six-foot-four, 190-pound defenceman in action unless they head south since Slovakia will play all of its games at the Scotiabank Saddledome in Calgary.

Prior to being returned to play his second WHL season with the Prince George Cougars, Marincin attended training camp with the Oilers.

"It was very good for me," said the native of Kosice, Slovakia. "It helped me as a player."

In both of his previous years at the world juniors, Slovakia finished the round-robin with a 1-3 record.



► Edmonton Oilers' Martin Marincin, left, and Linus Omark, right, congratulate teammate Magnus Paajarvi after a pre-season goal in September. Marincin will be competing at this year's World Junior Championship.

Two years ago in Saskatoon and Regina, Marincin had two assists in six games as Slovakia rebounded in the relegation round with two straight victories.

Last year, Marincin could only sit and watch as his teammates went 2-1 in relegation play to maintain its status in the top divi-

sion of the tournament.

In his second game of the event, Marincin was ejected from the game after delivering an elbow to the head of Jason Zucker of Team USA.

As a result of the infraction, Marincin was suspended for the remainder of the tournament.

Marincin stats

In his rookie season with the Cougars, Marincin put up a very respectable 14 goals and 42 assists in 67 games. Through 28 games this season, he had three goals to go with 13 assists.



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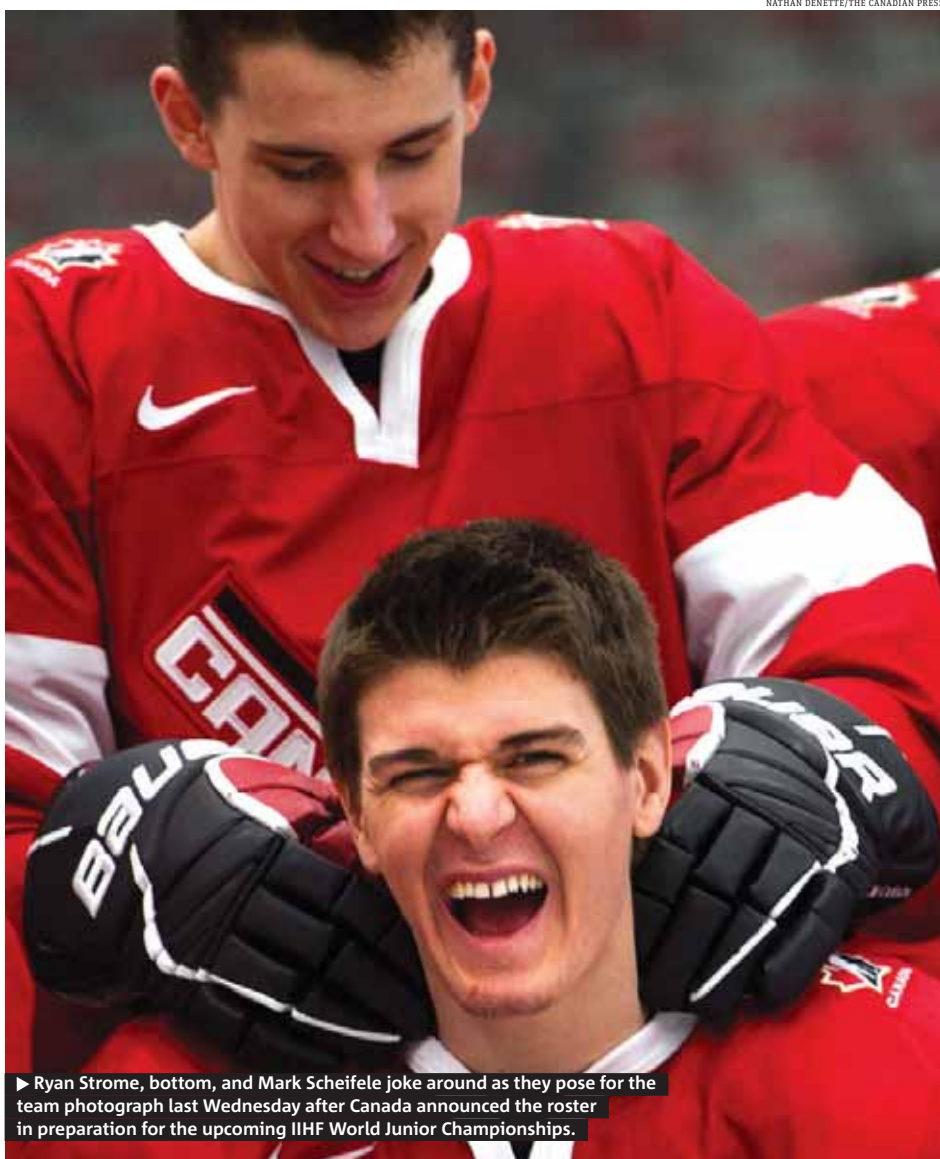
- ▶ The World Junior Hockey Championship opens Dec. 26 in Edmonton and Calgary
- ▶ Canada boasts two NHL forwards in Devante Smith-Pelly of the Anaheim Ducks and Brett Connolly of the Tampa Bay Lightning
- ▶ Twenty-two players were selected for the team
- ▶ Nine players from the Flames and Oilers' organizations made the team



▶ Team Canada goalies Scott Wedgewood, left, and Mark Visentin.

Hey, mom!

I made the team



▶ Ryan Strome, bottom, and Mark Scheifele joke around as they pose for the team photograph last Wednesday after Canada announced the roster in preparation for the upcoming IIHF World Junior Championships.



▶ Team Canada forwards Devante Smith-Pelly, left, and Brett Connolly.



▶ Defencemen Dougie Hamilton, left, and Jamie Oleksiak, right, joke around with a TSN microphone.

Schwartz is feeling added motivation in return for juniors

- Sister in Schwartz's mind as puck drops on WJHC
- Gold the goal after winning silver medal last year in Buffalo

LAURENCE HEINEN
EDMONTON@METRONEWS.CA

Jaden Schwartz has extra motivation heading into the 2012 IIHF World Junior Championship.

Schwartz said that his sister Mandi, who lost her two-year battle with leukemia in April, will be watching from up above as Canada goes for gold.

"She'll be there," said Schwartz, who was a member of Canada's silver-medal-winning squad in Buffalo last January. "It was a dream for me to make it last year for her and I'm sure she's happy and smiling right now to see that I get another chance to do it."

Schwartz played just two games for Canada last year in Buffalo. He put up a goal and two assists before fracturing his left ankle in a 7-2 win over the Czech Republic in the preliminary round.

"Last year was tough — obviously getting hurt and then that third period against Russia," said Schwartz, referring to Canada's third-period collapse in the gold medal final.

Leading 3-0 after two periods, Canada gave up five straight goals in the final

frame and had to watch as Russia celebrated their stunning gold-medal victory.

"It's over, it's an experience and you learn from it," said Schwartz, who is one of four returning players along with fellow forwards Brett Connolly and Quinton Howden and goalie Mark Visentin. "This year is a whole new group of guys, new faces, new team and everything like that. There's enough motivation just being here. We're all here to win gold and that's the bottom line. You try to forget last year, but at the same time you want to learn from it."

Schwartz, who hails from Wilcox, Sask., said he'll have several family members in attendance during both the preliminary round in Edmonton and the medal round in Calgary.

And he'd like nothing better than to help Canada win gold to honour Mandi's memory.

"What we're all here for is to win gold, but there's a process in doing that," he said. "It's a long journey to get there. You just want to get better each day. Obviously to do it for Canada and for the team and for Mandi, that'd be pretty special."



► Jaden Schwartz looks up ice during practice in preparation for the upcoming IIHF World Junior Championship.

Oil King Pysyk is looking to strike gold

LAURENCE HEINEN
EDMONTON@METRONEWS.CA

Perhaps no one had a bigger smile on his face on Dec. 14 than Mark Pysyk.

With the 2012 IIHF World Junior Championship being contested in his home province, Pysyk was the lone Alberta boy to get named to Canada's final roster.

"That's awesome," said the 19-year-old native of

Sherwood Park. "There was a bunch of guys that tried out but they can't all make it. I feel pretty honoured to be the only Alberta guy."

Currently in his fourth full season with the WHL's Edmonton Oil Kings, Pysyk said he'll definitely enjoy playing preliminary-round games at Rexall Place.

"I grew up watching



► Mark Pysyk.

the Oilers play at Rexall," he said. "I was fortunate enough to get drafted by the Oil Kings and get to play junior hockey there as well."

Pysyk would like nothing better than to help Canada reclaim world-junior gold in his home province.

"We're going to go for gold," he said. "I think that's the goal every year

Homeboy

Forward Brendan Gallagher of the Vancouver Giants was also raised in Sherwood Park until he was 12 and his family relocated to Tsawwassen, B.C.

with Canada. We'll take it one game at a time."

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consumption have hijacked an important Christian religious observance. I also think that in our hearts, many of us realize we are willing participants in a yearly charade of consumerism that masquerades as a wish for peace on Earth and good will towards men.

There is nothing new in that thinking. It has been debated every year for as long as I can remember. What caused me to stop and think was my friend's insistence on refusing to lie to his son about Santa Claus. At first, I

A friend of mine has caused me to question how we choose to celebrate Christmas. Very few of us would argue against the position that the champions of conspicuous

thought he was being more than a bit rigid in what constitutes a lie and was not taking into account the fact that he was destroying what for many children is a memorable part of childhood.

But the more I think about it, the more I think that perhaps he is right — a lie is a lie — no matter what. We detest governments that lie to us. We hate corporations that lie to us. But we seem to think that it is quite acceptable for us to lie to our children.

We have no qualms about telling our children about a man who lives at the North Pole with a cohort of unpaid elves who make toys for him so he can bring gifts to children all over the world. We don't even bother to qualify that statement to allow for the fact that there are billions of children who get skipped for religious and geopolitical reasons.

Not only do we lie about the existence of Santa Claus, we use the potential loss of a visit from this fictional philanthropist to keep children in line by telling them

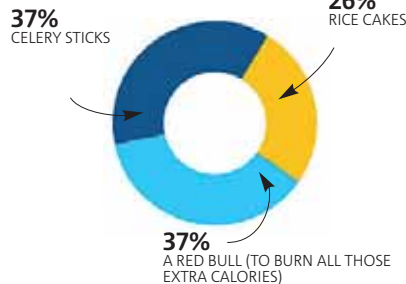
he can see everything they do. We also tell them he has a sleigh and reindeer that can fly. The lies just pile up and pile up.

Most of us want our children to follow our example and embrace our values. It would appear that Christmas is the one area in which we truly succeed in achieving that goal. We lie to our children and they go on to lie to their children. I think my friend is right. He will not lie to his child because he does not want his child to lie to him. Merry Christmas.



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Since Santa obviously needs to lose a few pounds, what health-conscious snack should you leave him to eat?



Local tweets



- ▶ @lauriewang: Dear kid biking down 76 ave, please wear a helmet. #yeg
- ▶ @nicolagavins: Yay! double billboard in #yeg. My work on both sides. #yeg-makeupartist
- ▶ @robmcannally: A spectacular December day in #yeg. Fluffy fresh snow, soft blue sky and the warmth of a winter sun. There is no place I'd rather be today
- ▶ @vwayner: #yeg transit #ets fail. Not only did the northbound lrt take over 40 minutes, but my bus drove the wrong route
- ▶ @Che_All: Its all about me on "Sunday wave Day" #yeg
- ▶ @dylusive: It's pretty slick out there #yeg ! I really need new tires.
- ▶ @AlbertaPirate: To whoever drives the white coup with the Ghostbusters logo on the door, I like the cut of your jib. #yeg #whoyougonnacall
- ▶ @Purpl3Buttons: Sigh. There should be more snow here in #yeg :(it just does not feel like Christmas without it

Daily Zoom

'You're not any cuter!'



Cat must learn how to behave

AUSTRALIA. Don't tell this cheeky cat it's rude to stare and stick out its tongue: poor Buzz is hearing-impaired. At cat obedience class at Prahran Vet Hospital in Melbourne, this 10-week-old kitten has to learn hand commands to know how to behave better. By the looks of it, he's still got his work cut out for him. ● METRO WORLD NEWS

'He's been dumped and is going to be harder to re-home, so I've had to teach him to pay attention to me. Already he can high-10 with both paws over his head.'

DR. NICOLE HOSKIN, VETERINARIAN

'Give me a treat, then I'll obey'

TRAINING. Felines can be taught to do many of the same things that dogs can: sit, stand and fetch things. The two species have to be trained in different ways, though. Dogs learn just to please their owners, but cats only pay attention for food rewards. "I find roast-chicken rewards work the best," Dr. Nicole Hoskin says. ● METRO WORLD NEWS

All bets off with 'psychic' feline

CATS IN NEWS. Buzz is not the only domesticated cat to make world headlines in recent days. One Italian feline by the moniker of FastidiousCat has been trending as the new Paul the Octopus after successfully predicting Serie A soccer powerhouse Udinese's last four fixtures.

● METRO WORLD NEWS



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2

scene

Box office



Sherlock Holmes is facing his worst enemy: declining crowds at the box office. Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows debuted on top with a \$40 million weekend. Overall business was down again. Alvin and the Chipmunks: Chipwrecked opened at No. 2 with \$23.5 million, about half the business the first two Chipmunks movies did on their debut weekends.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Beach Boys announce a reunion tour, with Brian Wilson, to mark 50th anniversary



► War Horse is the story of a horse named Joey, raised by a farm boy played by actor Jeremy Irvine.

Through a horse's eyes

► War Horse recounts the experience of the First World War through the journey of a thoroughbred ► Emotional drama explores the themes of loyalty and survival



STEVE GOW

SCENE@METRONEWS.CA

METRO WORLD NEWS IN LONDON

Whether we're talking about the popular stage play or the book upon which it was based, when it comes to awards, War Horse has always been a front-runner. That is something Steven Spielberg may be counting on with his latest movie adaptation.

"Yes, it was a children's story to start but it has, at its heart, great pain and suffering," admitted the book's author Michael Murpurgo. "And that's not necessarily a very attractive prospect for a family show but (Spielberg's) pulled it off unbelievably."

The acclaimed film (which hits theatres Christmas Day) is definitely the stuff of award season. An emotional drama surveying

the First World War through the eyes of an incredible thoroughbred, War Horse deals in themes of loyalty and survival during a war of attrition that star Emily Watson suggests makes one of Spielberg's most inspired films.

"The great achievement of the film is the perspective it puts on that war," said Watson. "Steven's other films have been about the Second World War,

which has a very clear, moral imperative to it. But this war was utterly pointless and taking a horse through the journey of that war is a brilliant way of cutting a cross-section of it and seeing it first-hand and it's really powerful."

Almost as powerful as the story were the actual horses that played the title role. As honoured as he was to star in the Spielberg film, actor Tom Hiddleston

insisted he was only upstaged by his animal co-stars.

"I was shamed at my artifice by their authenticity," said the Thor actor.

"That's really the thing I learned — just to turn up and be there because the horse will do something surprising, which will give you so much more than anything you might have preconceived in your own mind."

The math behind baggage fees.

Select airlines



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Helping you sort out the naughty from the nice

► This year's holiday releases are a mixed bag ► Michael Bublé flirts with Santa, a Stone Temple Pilot gets into reggae and jazz and Gaga wants a white snowman ► Read on as Metro helps you sort through the music



PAT HEALY
SCENE@METRONews.CA

METRO WORLD NEWS IN BOSTON

Michael Bublé, Christmas

Naughty: The biggest problem with this album is that once you hear it, you'll have to admit that you like Michael Bublé. But if the people you're telling have



heard Christmas, then they'll go easy on you.

Nice: Bublé is silly, classy, and so right on-key. Plus, he reimagines almost every song on this album. Sure, it's a little weird to hear Santa Baby as a vaguely homoerotic May/December come-on, but his torch song treatment of Mariah Carey's All I Want For Christmas Is You unearths a real longing that's missing in Mimi's version.

She & Him, A Very She & Him Christmas

Naughty: M. Ward's guitar playing is as beautiful as ever and Zooey Deschanel's voice is like the moon on the breast of the new-fallen snow, but it would be nice if there was at least one original track to spice up this 12-song collec-



tion. If you're not listening closely to them playing these standards, you might think

you're listening to one really long song.

Nice: She & Him switch the she and him roles on Baby It's Cold Outside, so Zooey Deschanel is the one persuading M. Ward to stay just a little bit longer. This long overdue update makes the 1936 song about 50 per cent less date-rapey.

Mariah Carey & John Legend, When Christmas Comes

Naughty: This song from Mariah's 2010 album, Merry Christmas II You, was rolled out as a single last month. With its department store horns and not-so-smooth R&B groove, the tune sounds like it was recorded



for a made-for-basic-cable-television movie. There are

little sleigh bells in the recording and the lyrics are cringe-worthy, with lines like "I can't wait to unwrap your love," mixed with a light "Jesus is the reason for the season" reference.

Nice: The album artwork is actually pretty cool, made to look like a well-worn record cover in the tradition of the Carpenters.



Lady Gaga, A Very Gaga Holiday

Naughty: This four-song EP, culled from her A Very Gaga Thanksgiving TV special, is only 25 per cent seasonal.

Nice: Only Mother Monster would have the audacity to add another verse to White Christmas. It's a stupid verse about her "dreaming of a white snowman," but it's kind of funny and her voice is right on.



Glee: The Music, The Christmas Album Vol. 2

Naughty: This album is full of covers, sung with a self-seriousness that brings out the Grinch in us. In Do They Know It's Christmas, when the cast sings the "thank God it's them instead of you" line, we couldn't help but say that exact same thing — then we went and sought out the original version. They keep trying, but no Glee cover has surpassed an original.

Nice: Extraordinary Merry Christmas is like a snowman sugar cookie. It's sweet and you want more of it. But it would taste a lot better if Kelly Clarkson were serving it to us.

Scott Weiland, The Most Wonderful Time of the Year

Naughty: The first half of this album finds the Stone Temple Pilots singer sounding like a drunk who would be featured on the gag-reel of the Ameri-

can Idol auditions episodes. **Nice:** As the album goes along, Weiland sobers up, finds his footing and dresses up standards like What Child Is This and O Holy Night in jazzy and island rhythms, respectively.



Eldridge Rodriguez, Christmas on the Allston-Brighton Line

Naughty: The major downfall of this three-song EP is that it's only a three-song EP.

Nice: The way that E.R. integrates pre-existing holiday lines into his originals is ef-

fortless. "I've got my records on, but all I play is Silent Night," he sings on Baby I'm Alone Tonight (Christmas Time). And though his narrator is certainly having a blue Christmas, there's a playfulness to the presentation, evident from the title of the song Christmas Eve (At Old Country Buffet).

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The story behind Spears' engagement

► Couple celebrates happy news with their closest paparazzi and publicists

THE WORD

DOROTHY ROBINSON
SCENE@METRONews.ca



Thanks to giving up the reigns to her life to a court-appointed conservatorship (her father and a lawyer) and, well, I'm just guessing here, some big pharma mood-stabilizers, I believe Britney Spears is in a much happier and healthier head space than she's ever been.

It actually "seems" like things are back to normal for the star/robot. Which is why it's surprising to see her engagement to boyfriend and former agent Jason Trawick come across as the most orchestrated news item since Kim Kardashian's wedding.

After all, "normal"

mega-watt celebrities keep things like this private; only the ones with something to prove try to force it down our throats.

On Thursday, the two got engaged. And then they celebrated that engagement — and Trawick's 40th birthday — in Las Vegas on Friday night. And, wouldn't you know it? An army of photographers and publicists were at the ready.

They followed them through each perfectly-crafted event — from the two of them checking in to Planet Hollywood, then having dinner at Sugar Factory American Brasserie, to dancing at the Chateau nightclub (notice all of that product placement? I'm sure they all paid a pretty penny for this). The whole night was completely packaged for our enjoyment.

Sure, out of everything



► Jason Trawick and Britney Spears

that Spears has been through, a formulated engagement is nothing.

It's just kind of sad that

this living doll can't be a real person who celebrates real milestones authentically.

Hef is proven wrong

Hugh Hefner admits he wasn't totally convinced having Lindsay Lohan pose nude for Playboy was a great idea.

"I kind of had mixed emotions about it initially, and then it turned into something bigger than life," Hefner tells E! News. "I wasn't quite sure where she was at in her life, obviously. It depends on whether it's Tuesday or Thursday."

And while he is pleased with the final product, the magazine mogul says he

wasn't the only one who needed convincing about Lohan baring all.

"I think it was essentially mama and the folks around her that kept pushing for less nudity," Hefner says.

"And I said, 'We're doing a nude pictorial here. We're going to do it in a very classy way and we're going to do it in a way in which it



► Hugh Hefner

will not be forgotten."

• METRO

Celebrity tweets



Just got back from mall. Told Santa what I wanted. He said he didn't even know what SAG was, let alone how to punish it.



@AlbertBrooks

@pattonoswalt

Anyone who sees #Young Adult, please Tweet your home address. I will personally bring a casserole to you.



@kirstiealley

"His words are bonds, his oaths are oracles, his heart as far from fraud, as heaven from earth" Shakespearedoes this man exist??



@JonahHill

"True Life: I Have A Hot Mom" is easily my favorite True Life.

Does Cruise have a man crush on David Beckham?

Tom Cruise has his eye on a new co-star, telling the Daily Mirror that he would "love to do action movies with [David] Beckham."

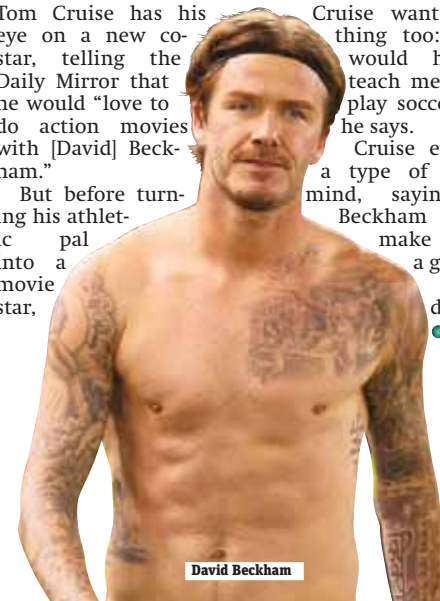
But before turning his athletic pal into a movie star,

Cruise wants something too: "David would have to teach me how to play soccer first," he says.

Cruise even has a type of role in mind, saying that Beckham "would make

a great bad-die."

• METRO



David Beckham



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A crafty Christmas

- You don't have to take your kids to see Santa to get them into the Christmas spirit
► Include them in the preparations and let them get involved by helping create decorations for the house and making their own gifts and wrapping ► It's fun, cheap and creative



There are loads of good

Preparation:

1 Ask an adult to help you put the butter, sugar and cream in a saucepan over a low heat. Leave until it comes to the boil and the sugar has melted.

2 Break the chocolate into small pieces and tip into a heatproof bowl. Carefully pour the melted butter mixture over the chocolate and stir until the chocolate is melted, smooth and shiny. Leave to cool, then cover with clingfilm and chill in the fridge until it's firm.

3 Making one truffle at a time, scoop a teaspoonful of the chocolate mixture and roll quickly between your hands into a ball. Place on a baking tray lined with baking parchment.

reasons for doing Christmas crafting: It's easy and cheap to make gifts and decorations from things you already have in the house, it's something fun

to do when the weather's bad, and it keeps them out of the shops where they'd only nag you for the latest Harry Potter Lego set.

Christmas crafting is

not just a practical way of whiling away cold winter afternoons, though. It offers a nice excuse for parents to spend quality time playing with their kids and

creating festive rituals that bond the family together for years to come, from decorating the tree as a family to baking biscuits for grandma.

Make festive gifts. Chocolate truffles



► From Christmas Cooking with Kids by Annie Rigg (Ryland, Peters and Small).

makes about 20

Ingredients:

- 50g unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 75g light brown soft sugar
- 150ml double cream
- 175g dark chocolate

Toppings:

- 150g milk or dark chocolate, chopped
- Chocolate sprinkles
- Cocoa powder
- Edible silver balls
- Chopped nuts (hazelnuts or flaked almonds)

time into it to coat completely.

4 For the toppings, ask an adult to help you put the chocolate in a heatproof bowl over a pan of simmering water or in the microwave on a low setting. Stir very carefully

until it has melted. Leave to cool slightly.

5 Sprinkle each of your chosen toppings (cocoa powder, chopped chocolate, sprinkles, edible sil-

ver balls, chopped nuts) onto a separate plate.

6 Scoop a teaspoonful of the melted chocolate into the palm of your hand and roll one truffle at a

7 Roll in one of the toppings. Repeat with the remaining truffles and leave to set on the baking tray before serving or packing in a pretty box.

Create cards & wrapping paper. Potato printing

Preparation:

1 Cut potato in half. Place cookie cutter on cutting board with sharp edge facing upwards. Press potato firmly down onto cutter, leaving cutter standing proud of cut

surface of potato by about 5mm.

2 Ask an adult to cut away edges of potato using sharp knife. Press potato down onto a dry cloth to remove excess moisture.

3 Pour paint into saucer and use end of sponge paint roller to apply paint to star shape. Too much paint will make the design bleed. If you have applied too much, gently blot potato on kitchen paper to remove excess.

4 Begin printing. To ensure design prints clearly, use gentle rocking motion, moving potato from side to side without lifting from paper. This will apply paint evenly. Continue to print at evenly-spaced intervals. Allow paint to dry completely.

Ingredients:

- Medium-sized potato
- Star-shaped cookie cutter
- Chopping board
- Sharp knife (used by adult)
- Dry cloth
- Paints
- Plain white paper

3
life

Lead warning



Health Canada is offering a reminder to shoppers who see children's jewelry on a wish list this holiday season.

It notes that high levels of lead and cadmium can be found in children's jewelry products and kids can ingest harmful amounts of the metals if they chew, suck or swallow the items. There's minimal lead absorption through the skin, so wearing the jewelry doesn't present a serious risk to health.

THE CANADIAN PRESS



Holiday festivities can cause sensory overload for people with dementia.



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Pockets of festive goodness

► These Turkey Pocket Pies are a delicious way to truly get your appetizers looking like they belong in a Christmas season table spread



THE CANADIAN PRESS H/O

Turkey Pocket Pies

► This recipe makes six servings and they can easily be decorated to make them festive.

These festive pastries are ideal for an appetizer before an elegant dinner or as canapes to serve with wine to guests who drop by during the festive season.

If the dough gets too warm while preparing the pies, refrigerate it for 15 minutes before baking.

Use any leftover dough to cut out shapes to deco-

rate the top of the pocket pies. Brush the back of the dough shapes with milk or egg wash to affix to pie and bake as directed.

Preparation:

- 1 Preheat oven to 200 C (400 F). Remove pie shells from freezer and let thaw at room temper-

ature for 10 minutes.

- 2 Remove pie shells from foil onto clean, flat, lightly floured work surface. If cracks appear in pastry, press together and repair using fingers moistened with water.

- 3 Cut out 6 shapes from each pie shell using a 7-

Ingredients:

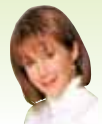
- 2 frozen deep-dish pie shells
- 50 ml (1/4 cup) finely chopped leftover turkey
- 30 ml (2 tbsp) cranberry sauce
- 30 ml (2 tbsp) grated cheddar cheese
- Pepper, to taste
- 15 ml (1 tbsp) milk

by-10-cm (2 3/4-by-4-inch) cookie cutter. Set any leftover dough aside.

- 4 In bowl, combine turkey, cranberry sauce, cheese and pepper. Divide mixture evenly among 6 cut-outs, mounding in centre and leaving a 5-mm (1/4-inch) border and top with remaining cut-outs. Gently press edges together and crimp with a fork. Brush tops lightly with milk and bake for 12 to 15 minutes or until pastry is golden. Let pies rest for 10 minutes before serving. **THE CANADIAN PRESS/ TENDERFLAKE**

Rose Reisman's Swap It

Veggie dips are a standard during the holiday party season. With a wide variety of flavours, some may seem healthy but be careful because names can be deceiving.



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With a pre-made pastry crust and the frozen veggies you have in the freezer, you can have a simple and quick quiche ready to enjoy with a crunchy green salad.

Preparation:

- 1 Prepare pie crust according to package directions. Set aside

and let cool.

- 2 In flat-bottomed frying pan, melt butter and cook hash browns until crisp and golden. Remove from heat.

- 3 In a large bowl, mix together eggs, frozen vegetables, cheddar

cheese, salt and pepper. Add cooled hash browns and mix.

- 4 Pour egg mixture into cooled pie shell and bake in 190 C (375 F) oven for 35 to 40 minutes until golden brown. Using oven mitts, remove from

oven and serve.

THE CANADIAN PRESS/ TENDERFLAKE/ THIS RECIPE WAS ADAPTED FOR METRO NEWS BY EMILY RICHARDS, A PROFESSIONAL HOME ECONOMIST, COOKBOOK AUTHOR AND A TV CELEBRITY CHEF. FOR MORE, VISIT EMILYRICHARDSCOOKS.CA.

THE CANADIAN PRESS H/O

Mediterranean Quiche



Ingredients:

- 1 frozen pie crust
- 15 ml (1 tbsp) unsalted butter
- 250 ml (1 cup) shredded frozen hash browns
- 3 eggs, beaten
- 250 ml (1 cup) frozen Mediterranean-style vegetables
- 250 ml (1 cup) shredded cheddar cheese
- Pinch each salt and

Be safe, be eco-conscious

► Shovelling snow causes heart attacks every year ► And snow blowers aren't exactly friendly on the environment ► So, what to do?

BEN KNIGHT
LIFE@METRONews.ca

Shovelling snow is a pain in the back. The pushing, the lifting ... the throwing.

Yes, a snow shovel is green and eco-friendly. It doesn't chew up power like electric or gas-powered snow blowers.

But injuries are a real risk — and clearing snow can be fatal, as well.

The Canadian Heart & Stroke Foundation estimates that

over 16,000 Canadians die of heart attacks every year.

The Huffington Post has reported snow shovelling accounts for less than half of one per cent of fatal coronaries, but that's around 50

Canadians — annually — who go out to clear their snow, and never come back.

Snow blowers are an obvious alternative. But they have an environmental impact — fossil fuel-powered ones especially.

"These blowers emit a ton of carbon emissions that pollute the air," notes Trish Smith, a popular blog-

Local snowfall

Check it out Edmonton:

► **Snow** Due to its relatively dry climate, Edmonton enjoys milder winters than Winnipeg and Regina. It snows an average of 54 days per year. Total annual snowfall averages 123.5 cm.

ger at greenopolis.com.

"(They) also use gasoline that can eventually wind up in our streams or in our soil, and that's no way treat our earth."

So is there a way to build a better shovel? There's a broad variety of ergonomic snow shovels on the market. Some have bent handles designed to ease the strain of lifting. Others use wide blades and conjoined double handles to distribute and minimize physical stress.

And then there's the Sno Wovel — wovel.com — an innovative invention that combines a traditional



► Make your life easier when shovelling snow this winter.

shovel with a wheel.

"It's not only more efficient — there's a three-quarters reduction in exertion — but this takes the real pain out of shovelling, greatly reducing exertion and the risk of injury," says Mark Noonan, president of Nootools, who's been making and marketing Sno Wovels for the past

six years.

Traditional shovels focus most of the physical force of lifting and throwing snow on the small of your back. Adding a wheel moves the fulcrum away from the spine and onto the axle, cutting down on jarring and twisting.

"The shovel blade is actually angled at 45 degrees,"

Noonan adds. "That helps you throw more forward."

Shovelling snow is one of those rare cases where the greener solution can be significantly more dangerous than the power-burning alternatives.

Perhaps the best solution is to consider all the alternatives — and always remember to be careful.

POWERING A CHANGE IN THINKING OVER BATTERIES

Where in Winnipeg can I dispose of batteries? *Cynthia of Winnipeg*

QUEEN OF GREEN

LINDSAY COULTER
GREEN@METRONews.ca



Dispose might as well be a four-letter word.

I know

you really mean recycle. And recycling batteries has never been easier.

London Drugs stores in Western Canada, including Winnipeg, have committed to recycling batteries — single-use and rechargeable.

Check out their in-store recycling program, which also accepts packaging, cell-phones, cameras, and small

appliances (purchased at London Drugs).

Recycling fees might apply to items not purchased from the store.

Two excellent battery recycling know-it-all websites are Call2Recycle.ca and Earth911.com.

Just enter your postal code into their online drop-off locator.

You'll get a list of locations near you, ranked by proximity, with complete contact information and a map.

There's also no charge to recycle batteries from things like your remote control, cordless power tools, or calculator.

Next, make the switch to rechargeable batteries.

Maximize their use by reading the instructions carefully.

It sounds obvious, but each product has specific guidelines when it comes to charging a battery for the first time.

A big no-no is returning a fully charged battery to the charger for an extra boost. This will only short-

en its lifespan.

Also never leave batteries in your charger if they're not actually charging. Don't forget to recycle your rechargeable batteries when they're done.

And keep your eyes open for battery recycling drop-off boxes. The last one I saw was in my neighbourhood pharmacy.



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Home(work) for the holidays

► Celebrating the season sans family is a reality that many students across the country will face this year

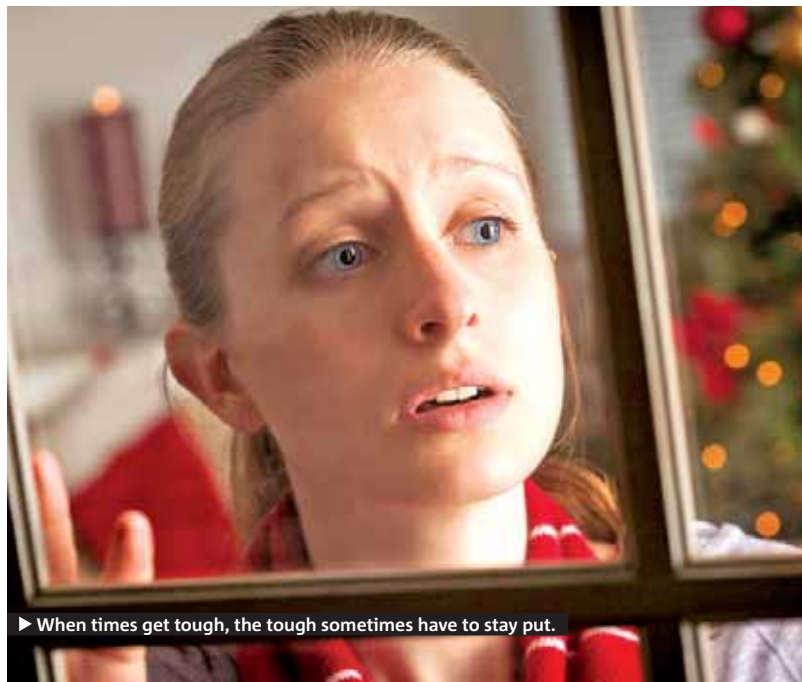
Amongst the frantic last-minute trips to the mall and the consumption of Advent chocolate and eggnog, it's easy to forget one of the joys of the holidays: spending time with family.

Yet, for many across the country, namely students who study out of province or even out of country, being home for the holidays isn't an option.

Spiked airline costs and limited downtime are a few of the reasons some generation Yers are forgoing Christmas reunions to become holiday orphans. And for others, like Andrea Nunes of Vancouver, spending this time of year with the family is about as enticing as standing in a long lineup at the post of-

"Taking the two weeks to go back halfway across the world wouldn't really make sense. If you don't think about (being away from your family) you don't get sad. So I don't think about it."

MEELASHINI AUADUER, STUDENT



► When times get tough, the tough sometimes have to stay put.

fice.

"I have sentimental feelings about Christmas itself but they're not really about my family," said the Emily Carr University office assistant. "My family against the backdrop of Christmas can't help but bring up all these seething, burning resentments from Christmases

pasts."

After her grandmother passed away when Nunes was a teenager, things in her family "broke down" to the point that her mother cancelled Christmas one year.

It's since become a mutual agreement among all family members not to celebrate together, which she

thinks is "pretty great."

Nunes still acknowledges the holiday, and usually uses the time to bake. She also makes a point of calling her family members on Christmas Day.

"It doesn't make me feel sad, it makes me feel relieved," she said.

For Meelashini Auaduer, a third-year commerce stu-

dent at Dalhousie University in Halifax, travelling to her home country of Malaysia during the holidays isn't a logical decision.

"Taking the two weeks to go back halfway across the world wouldn't really make sense," said the 21-year-old.

The fact that her family doesn't celebrate Christmas "softens the blow." Instead, she feels those pangs of sadness during the end of October, when her family celebrates Deepavali, the festival of lights.

Still, Auaduer insists she never feels alone during the holidays, and spends them travelling to Montreal or Toronto, or having a potluck with other Malaysian friends.

"If you don't think about (being away from your family) you don't get sad," she said. "So I don't think about it."

And yet many foreign students still manage to come together over the holidays. Moses Richu, a third-year University of British Columbia student from Kenya, said celebrating Christmas away encourages you to develop new traditions and cus-

Deck the halls

Some universities actively make an effort to accommodate their students who don't have anywhere to go over the holidays.

► For the past 12 years, Concordia University in Montreal has hosted a dinner soiree. The school invites all of its 4,700 foreign students, and the first 300 to respond are treated to a three-course meal.

► "We target international students as a way to make them feel at home and spread the season's good cheer and try to help them feel the good cheer," said Scott McCulloch with the Advancement and Alumni Relations department, which organizes the dinner along with the school's Alumni Association.

toms with people from different parts of the world.

"You get 10, 20 guys together and you start explaining how it works and you learn so much from each other," he said. "It's like a huge room full of culture."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Building from the ground up

TURNING POINT

TERESA KRUIZE

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Four years ago, Tony Kokol sat in a Federal Peniten-

tiary having Christmas dinner with his Mom and Dad.

A life of recreational drug use had spun into addiction and some bad life choices put him behind bars.

"It got to the point where I lost everything; my career, health, credit and relationship. I realized, 'Oh my God, I've hit bottom.'"

Fresh Start Recovery Centre in Calgary proved to be a turning point in Tony's life.

He cleaned up, got into the construction business



► Tony Kokol is currently working on constructing the Fresh Start Recovery Centre building in Calgary.

and worked his way up to foreman on Fresh Start's

new facility. Now with the new building on the verge

of being completed, Tony is training to become an addictions counsellor.

"My life is full and great. I'm blessed to be surrounded by people who have my back.

Every time I walk through our new building it validates the journey that I'm on."

Tony recently went out for lunch with his Mom. As she reached out to hug her son he realized how far he had come since that Christmas in jail four years ago.

"I put a smile on my mother's heart."



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Packers denied perfection

► Green Bay's 19-game win streak ended by Chiefs ► Winning Super Bowl is real goal: Coach



Mike McCarthy never put a whole lot of stock in a perfect season, except as a means of gaining home-field advantage and setting the Green Bay Packers up for another Super Bowl run.

Well, they still have a chance to earn home-field advantage.

The perfect season? That's history.

Kyle Orton threw for 299 yards to outduel Aaron Rodgers, and the Kansas City Chiefs rallied behind interim coach Romeo Crennel for a shocking 19-14 victory on Sunday that ended the Packers' 19-game winning streak. It was their first loss since Dec. 19, 2010, at New England.

"I personally always viewed the undefeated season as, really, just gravy," McCarthy said. "The goal was to get home-field advantage and win the Super Bowl. That's what we discussed."

"We were fortunate enough to be in the position to possibly achieve the undefeated season," he added, "but we still have the primary goal in



► Packers QB Aaron Rodgers is sacked by Kansas City's Tamba Hall.

front of us, and that's to get home-field advantage."

Green Bay, playing without leading receiver Greg Jennings and top rusher James Starks because of injuries, can wrap up the No. 1 seed in their final two games against Chicago and Detroit.

But the Packers no longer have the pressure of becoming the second team in NFL history to win a Super Bowl with a perfect record, or extending the second-longest winning streak in league history.

"I think our goal ultimate goal is to win a Super Bowl. The next step is getting that number one seed in the playoffs," Rodgers said. "We've got a home playoff game — we've got a bye secured."

Rodgers was 17 of 35 for 235 yards and a touchdown, and he also scampered 8 yards for another touchdown with 2:12 left in the game. But the Packers (13-1) were unable to recover the onside kick, and Kansas City picked up a couple of first downs to secure the victory.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Colts win



The Indianapolis Colts finally won without Peyton Manning. It just took 14 games and three quarterbacks to get there.

- Dan Orlovsky threw one touchdown pass, a key block on an 80-yard TD run and the Colts defence held Chris Johnson to 55 yards rushing, to beat Tennessee 27-13 and avoid becoming the second 0-16 team in league history.
- For the Titans (7-7), the loss was a devastating blow to their playoff hopes. Had the Titans closed out the season with three wins, they likely would have reached the post-season. Now they'll probably need help from other teams just to get in.

4

sports

Oilers preview

Detroit at Edmonton, 7:30 p.m.
TV: Sportsnet



The Red Wings (20-10-1) travel to Edmonton (14-15-3) playing some of their best hockey this season. Since Nov. 19, Detroit has won 11 of 14 games, although all three losses came on the road this month.

THE CANADIAN PRESS



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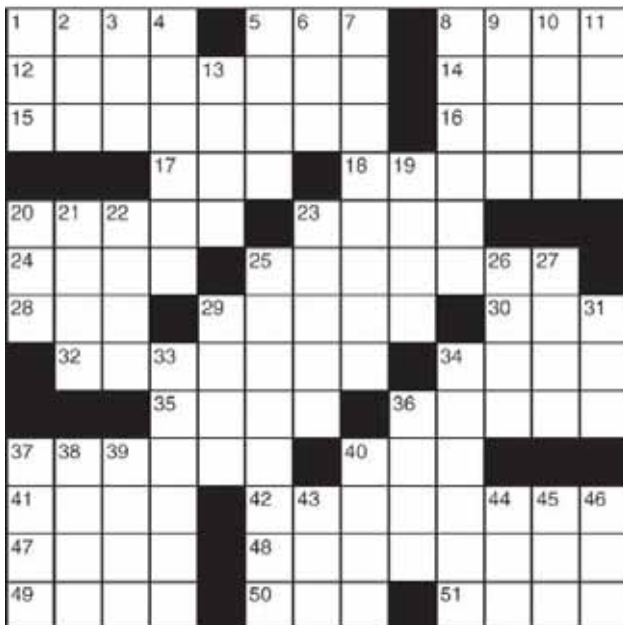
Crossword

Across

- 1 Bakery buys
5 Youngster
8 Treaty
12 Australian city
14 Reverberate
15 Like spreadsheets, e.g.
16 Slender
17 Scepter
18 Each
20 Hybrid eating utensil
23 Entanglement
24 Bohemian
25 Refrigerator decorations
28 Humour
29 Gave a darn
30 Regret
32 Grieved
34 Intentions
35 Primary
36 Sag
37 "— & Louise"
40 To and —
41 Emanation
42 Ivy League university
47 List of options
48 Catholic prayer
49 "Hey, you!"
50 Remiss
51 Je ne — quoi

Down

- 1 Atl. counterpart
2 Altar affirmative
3 Conger or moray
4 Wet cement mixture
5 Sort
6 Mrs. McKinley
7 Mad



- 8 Small
9 Liniment target
10 Stylish
11 Color quality
13 Beyond control
19 Frogs' hangout
20 Witnessed
21 Proper partner?
22 "Beetle Bailey" dog
23 Carpenter or Black
25 Crazy
26 Threesome
27 Japanese wrestling
29 Study all night
31 Kreskin's claim
33 Diacritical mark
34 Scents
36 Snare or tom-tom
37 Pack down tightly
38 Shades
39 Sea eagles
40 Show off your muscles
43 Eggs
44 Lingerie item
45 Mid-afternoon, on a sundial
46 Some small batteries

► Friday's answer

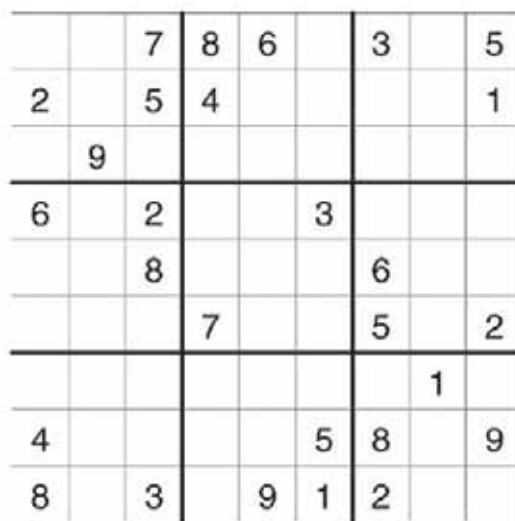


For today's crossword answers and for expanded horoscopes, go to metronews.ca

♈ Aries March 21-April 20 Misunderstandings could be expensive, so make sure those you work and do business with know what you are up to today.
♉ Taurus April 21-May 21 Take life at a more measured pace over the next 24 hours.
♊ Gemini May 22-June 21 Opportunities to prosper are all around, but you must be selective.
♋ Cancer June 22-July 22 You seem to be a bit touchy at the moment, and that's bad news for anyone who gets on your wrong side.
♌ Leo July 23-Aug. 23 You can sense that something big is about to happen but you can't work out what it might be. Relax.
♍ Virgo Aug. 24-Sept. 22 Why are you trying so hard to convince people that your ideas are best?
♎ Libra Sept. 23-Oct. 23 What seems like a setback today will turn out to be a blessing in disguise before the end of the year, so don't waste time worrying about it.
♏ Scorpio Oct. 24-Nov. 22 You will face some tough obstacles today, but being a Scorpio you will enjoy the challenge.
♐ Sagittarius Nov. 23-Dec. 21 Your options may be limited at the moment but that's no bad thing.
♑ Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 20 You will have to use up a lot of physical and mental energy to enjoy what is really quite a modest return. In which case, why bother?
♒ Aquarius Jan. 21-Feb. 18 There are two ways you can get what you want: you can go it alone or you can partner up with people who share your ambitions. It's a no-brainer really.
♓ Pisces Feb. 19-March 20. Keep your mind focused on a particular target.

© SALLY BROMPTON

Sudoku



How to play

Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

Friday's answer ►

5	7	6	4	1	3	8	9	2
8	3	9	6	2	5	7	4	1
1	4	2	8	7	9	3	6	5
2	6	5	3	9	8	1	7	4
4	8	7	1	5	2	9	3	6
9	1	3	7	4	6	2	5	8
3	9	4	5	8	1	6	2	7
7	2	8	9	6	4	5	1	3
6	5	1	2	3	7	4	8	9

A look at the weather

TODAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
Min -8° Max 5°	Min 4° Max 5°	Min -7° Max 3°

Michele McDougall Weather Specialist

"My favourite part is reporting the weather. It fascinates me, and as we know around here, it's always changing, keeping forecasters on their toes". WEEKDAYS 5:30 A.M.



Caption contest



WIN! You write it!

Write a funny caption for the image above and send it to play@metronews.ca — the winning caption will be published in tomorrow's Metro.

Today's horoscope

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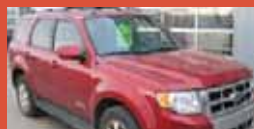
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